

Message Text

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65-62

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 INRE-00 /061 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8728

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINT AV SC UK

SUBJ: CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE BETWEEN ST. KITTS-SECESSIONIST
ANGUILLA

REF: BTN 2061 (1974)

1. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORT, ANGUILLA COUNCIL LEADER RONALD WEBSTER WILL GO TO LONDON IN MAY FOR FURTHER TALKS WITH HMG ON ISLAND'S CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE. WEBSTER IS GOING TO LONDON AT INVITATION OF MISS JOAN LESTOR, BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE AT FCO. IN PRESS INTERVIEW, WEBSTER REPEATED HIS OFTEN STATED POSITION ON SECESSION OF ANGUILLA FROM ST KITTS. HE SAID THAT "UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL ANGUILLA RETURN TO THE ASSOCIATION OF ST KITTS-NEVIS." WEBSTER ADDED THAT "IF THERE WAS NO SETTLEMENT ON A NEW CONSTITUTION BY THE END OF MAY, ANGUILLA WOULD REVERT TO ITS PREVIOUS POSITION (OF A SECESSIONIST ISLAND) THAT EXISTED WHEN THE BRITISH TROOPS CAME HERE IN 1969." HE NOTED THAT FIVE MONTHS AGO, THE ANGUILLA COUNCIL CEASED ALL WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH HMG'S COMMISSIONER IN ANGUILLA AND VOWED THE ANGUILLA COUNCIL "WOULD CONTINUE THIS WAY UNTIL FIRM PROPOSALS COME FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD INSTITUTE AN INTERIM SEMI-SELF GOVERNING ARRANGEMENT."

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2. IN BRIDGETOWN FOR A REGIONAL MEETING DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF LEEWARD ISLAND AIR TRANSPORT (LIAT), ST KITTS DEPUTY PREMIER C.A. PAUL SOUTHWELL, ATTORNEY GENERAL LEE MOORE AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR NEVIS FRED PARRIS REVIEWED PROBLEMS OF ST KITTS-NEVIS-ANGUILLA WITH THE AMBASSADOR, DCM, AND POLITICAL OFFICER. MOORE SAID THE CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE BETWEEN ST KITTS AND ANGUILLA IS "STALEMATED" AND HE DOES NOT EXPECT ANY CHANGE IN THE SITUATION EVEN AFTER WEBSTER'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO UK. MOORE NOTED THAT WEBSTER HIMSELF IS AN OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS. HE ADDED HMG IS ALSO OF THE OPINION THAT WEBSTER IS "INTRANSIGENT." ACCORDING TO MOORE, THE GOSK IS TRYING TO GET ACROSS THE MESSAGE ABOUT WEBSTER TO THE PEOPLE OF ANGUILLA BUT, SO FAR, IT HAS NOT SUCCEEDED. WEBSTER IS BOTH "PHILOSOPHICALLY AND IDEOLOGICALLY" OPPOSED TO THE BRADSHAW GOVERNMENT, MOORE SAID. NOTING THAT HE HAS HIS OWN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, SOUTHWELL SAID ANGUILLANS ARE BECOMING DISILLUSIONED WITH BOTH HMG AND WEBSTER AND HIS FOLLOWERS. ACCORDING TO MOORE, AT ONE TIME ANGUILLANS WANTED THEIR ISLAND TO BE EITHER A CROWN COLONY OR A PART OF THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS. HE SAID A STATEMENT AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME BY THE USG CLARIFYING THE SITUATION OF ANGUILLA WITH REGARD TO LATTER WOULD BE HELPFUL. MOORE BELIEVES THAT ANGUILLA WILL NOT REJOIN THE ASSOCIATED STATE OF ST KITTS-NEVIS UNTIL "OUTSIDE FORCES" OFFER SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS TO DO SO. HE THINKS A SPECIAL FUND FOR DEPRESSED AREAS LIKE ANGUILLA AND NEVIS WOULD HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED TO BRING ANGUILLA UP TO ST KITTS' STATE OF DEVELOPMENT. ANGUILLA NEEDS BOTH ELECTRICITY AND WATER SERVICES, ACCORDING TO MOORE. HE NOTED THAT HMG COULD HAVE PUT THEM IN A LONG TIME AGO, BUT THE RECURRING COSTS OF MAINTENANCE, FUEL AND SPARE PARTS HAVE PROBABLY INHIBITED HMG FROM DOING SO. FOR THESE REASONS, MOORE BELIEVES A SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR DEPRESSED AREAS IN AMOUNT OF ABOUT US 10 MILLION DOLLARS SHOULD BE SET UP. SOUTHWELL REPEATED HIS FIRMLY HELD OPINION REPORTED IN REF (A) THAT "HMG PROVIDED TROOPS A PAID HOLIDAY IN THE SUN WITH MONEY THAT COULD HAVE BEEN USED FOR DEVELOPMEN IN THE ST KITTS-NEVIS-ANGUILLA." HE SAID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ST KITTS-NEVIS HELD "KEY TO THE SOLUTION OF CONSTITUTIONAL STALEMATE." NOTING THAT GOSK WAS PURSUING A DEVELOPMENT POLICY THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE STATE (I.E., TO CONCENTRATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ST KITTS WHERE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE LIVE.) HE SAID THAT "PROGRESS IN BUILDING THE ECONOMY WOULD BE SUFFICIENT INDUCEMENT TO BRING ANGUILLA BACK INTO FOLD."

3. COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY, AS EMBASSY'S CONVERSATIONS WITH GOSK OFFICIALS CONFIRM, THE 8-YEAR DISPUTE OVER THE CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF ANGUILLA IS NO NEARER TO RESOLUTION THAN IT HAS BEEN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST. REGARDING ATTORNEY GENERAL MOORE'S

REQUEST THAT THE USG ISSUE STATEMENT FORECLOSING POSSIBILITY
OF ANGUILLA BECOMING ASSOCIATED WITH OR A PART OF THE USVI,
EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT IS APPROPRIATE TO ISSUE STATEMENT
AT THE PRESENT TIME. HOWEVER, SHOULD ANGUILLANS RAISE MATTER
WITH USG, BELIEVE THEY SHOULD BE DISABUSED OF ANY IDEA THEY
COULD BE INCORPORATED INTO USVI.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SOVEREIGNTY, POLITICAL SITUATION, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRIDGE00622
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750135-0470
From: BRIDGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750439/aaaabkjp.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BTN 2061, 75 (197
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE BETWEEN ST. KITTS-SECESSIONIST ANGUILLA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AV, SC, UK, (WEBSTER, RONALD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006